

**Western Maine Planning Process for Townships and Plantations Served by the Land  
Use Planning Commission  
Franklin County Subcommittee  
-Monday March 23, 2015-  
Kingfield Town Office**

## **Minutes**

**Attending:**

Committee members: Kirsten Burbank, Thom Dodd, Charlie Woodworth, James Taylor.

Staff: John Maloney, AVCOG; Hugh Coxe, LUPC; Samantha Horn-Olson, LUPC.

Public: None

It was noted that the Committee Rules state that to conduct committee business a quorum of five members be present. There were only four members of the committee present. Nevertheless those present wished to proceed with the meeting and discuss the agenda items realizing any final actions would have to wait until the next meeting.

**Agenda Items**

Minutes of February 23, 2015 meeting

None present had questions or corrections. Will act on accepting at next meeting.

Overview of Somerset County Committee meeting

John Maloney reported on the February 26, 2015 Somerset County Committee meeting. Kirsten Burbank stated that she appreciated the minutes of the Somerset Committee and that information allowed for coordination between the two committees.

Recommendation for chair of Committee

John Maloney reviewed what the Proposal for Western Maine Community Guided Planning Process Document stated about Planning Committee co-chairs. Thom Dodd suggested Doug Marble. Charlie Woodworth agreed and also suggested Kirsten Burbank. Kirsten indicated her interest serving as the Franklin County chair. As there were not a quorum John indicated that he would send the names to the rest of the group and have them weigh in, and then his board will make a decision.

Resolution of initial area of focus

To follow up on the discussion at the February 23, 2015 meeting concerning the initial area of focus John reviewed what was contained in the approved Proposal for Western Maine Community Guided Planning Process Document. Members present indicated the following: need to keep focus fairly narrow or will take too long a time; shouldn't exclude other uses; encourage the uses we're talking about; need to identify what the need is before doing the zoning; and will read as is, interpreted to not exclude other land uses. Since there was no quorum will discuss at next meeting.

Stage 1 schedule and products

John reviewed the stage 1 schedule, emphasized the importance of discussing the public input phase.

John also reviewed the goals as laid out in the attachment and said these are his ideas, and a starting point for them to work with. An example of information to work with is the map for emergency services planning that Doug Marble sent along from the High Peaks Alliance . No additions or modifications were suggested. The list of products was reviewed. Jim commented that the first 2 items on this list are key to the effort. Kirsten suggested that's a whole work session. We'll start that in this meeting. Jim suggested that a straw proposal with a small group can be an efficient way to work.

#### Initial area of focus issues/problems/needs and information needs

John indicated that these agenda items are an opportunity for the committee to identify issues, and needs based upon everyone's individual knowledge and experience. The following were identified and discussed to varying degrees.

Kirsten – ½ mile from her home (Salem Twp) She's very visual aesthetic. Illegal junkyard on routes between hub communities. Has grown over time. Bad impression for visitors. Would like to see something that rewards when property is visually positive. Not attractive – branding issue.

Similar issue came up in Greenville – everyone needs to be on same page about aesthetics.

Gravel pit is another example.

What's the effect on tourism? What are the expectations of visitors?

What are the impacts of dispersed, very visible trailers.

Enforcement, how do you enforce that? Who enforces.

This is essentially about conflict of uses. Gravel pits are a necessary part of timber harvesting. But how do they all fit together? Are the expectations of regulation users changing? Are there ways to buffer the issues?

Can provide info about examples of standards for buffering and nuisance uses.

Kirsten – another example, cutting of trees and how it impacts neighbors.

Charlie – Recreational uses – way to streamline communications between LUPC, BPL, IFW? (other agencies)

Permitting efficiency and ease

Allow parties to come to a common agreement so everyone feels heard.

At what point in the process is this most valuable to have? There may be benefit to have that early on. This could be a recommended 1<sup>st</sup> step scoping meeting. This may relate to predictability, including zoning.

Coordination of standards – Forestry – statewide standards would be helpful because of the multiple standards.

Recreation proposal – yurts, trail weren't enough people to support it with hiking/biking need to be able to drive to a facility. Overnight visitors who can afford to stay don't usually want to hike/bike in.

Everyone is “softer” than they were. Sensitive to price, but have to make the capital investment.

What does that mean about land use? Dispersed recreation has its limits. Rafting and snowmobiles are driving other revenues. Beer sales, eats are really important.

Could think about support services availability as an issue.

Kirsten gets a lot of questions about nearest gas station they can snowmobile to.

Coburn Gore has a gas station- where are the services now?

Do the users perceive a gap? Does that limit outdoor recreation?

Are roads a limiting factor? Are there specific standards? Most of the time it will be existing logging roads. Do landowners balk at this? No, they really don't. ATVs would be a conflict on logging roads

Example Pittston Farm – increased use. Is this type of increase a concern?

Rec lodging was driven by the demand for more amenities. The demand is changing. “Softer” Are there other services beyond fuel and food that are in more demand possibly in more remote locations?

Growing demand for an “unplugged vacation”. Lack of reception /wifi may be a plus in some cases.

But, on the other hand connectivity is an issue.

Think about protecting deer yards and water fowl areas in doing the zoning.

This gets addressed through the Y-FW zone, and also through the permit process – no undue adverse impacts. This is a medium to tight scale of addressing habitat concerns. Doesn't get at the multi-township perspective. Need to not impact remaining resources.

May 7<sup>th</sup> – Maine Woods Consortium

Recreational interests- what are they? Is it snowmobiling? Bird watching? Etc. are there examples we can use – other places that can serve as models? Info needed

A lot of places that are examples are out west on public lands - Other examples are Adirondack Park and NJ Pine Barrens

Traveling from one village to another and get your lunch and spend the night is ideal.

For Adirondacks this is a work in progress

Question about trail construction and what are the regulations.

Products could be other things besides putting a zone on the ground.

Could be different criteria for zones or standards for buffering uses.

Expedited reviews for some uses could be a possibility

One model to think about – Iceland compared w/Northern Franklin County. Iceland has ring roads/built recreation and tourism economy based on what they have – farm stays and meals.

Italy has done something = subsidies for farmers to take in tourist – relates to home occupations and the regulations for them.

#### Public Forum Discussion

John discussed options for public meeting/forums. Committee members discussed the following.

Serving food is important

Would it be better to do a survey?

Is there an association or clubs to target?

Flagstaff area business Assoc.

Sandy River business Assoc.

Snowmobile & ATV Clubs

Innkeepers Assoc.

MATC

Maybe need to identify the recreation interest

Maine Audubon

A few local store owners

BDN & PPA and their followers

Guides

Could ask steering committee for ideas of points of contact

Will coordinate with Somerset Committee – should the two groups do a survey or public meeting together?

Date and items for next meeting

April 27, 2015

**Notes of meeting by: Samantha Horn-Olson, LUPC**

**Minutes prepared by: John Maloney, AVCOG**